

FINAL REPORT

Presented to the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture
Agro Environmental Technology Grant 2000
AGR-AET-00

MASSACHUSETTS AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM, INC.
*"Applying and Promoting Environmentally Sound Advanced Agricultural Technology
on Farms and in the Classroom"*

The Board of Directors of Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. is pleased to submit the FINAL REPORT for the 2000 Agro-Environmental Technology Grant Program.

This project funded expansion of Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc. to reach high school teachers by conducting four intensive technology workshops. Of the four topics presented **Aquaponics** was chosen to be enhanced further with additional website links, web posted curriculum, photos, and interaction on the MAC website www.aginclassroom.org. We have email addresses from most workshop participants and are communicating updates and announcements to them electronically.

Ten professional Development Points were awarded to teachers who attended a workshop, and did a follow-up classroom project. Evaluations for each workshop are attached, and summarized. All high school grade levels (9-12th) were well represented as outlined on the attached summary sheet. Teachers represented a wide geographical area coming from forty different cities/towns; workshops were positioned to take place at various locations throughout the Commonwealth.

The project was conducted with the following facilitators and/or educators:

Overall: Deborah C. Hogan, Education Consultant and Evaluation Coordinator; Jim Munger, Technology Consultant; Mary McBrady, Administrative Coordinator. Routine review of the project by the full Board of Directors of MAC.

Workshop Trainers: Aquaponics – Jim Munger and Scott Soares; Soil Mapping with GPS – Dr. Rich Bonanno; Integrated Pest Management –Craig Hollingsworth; Tissue Culture – Susan Cheplick and the Tissue Culture staff of Nourse Farm. Evaluations were completed following each workshop; it consisted of a rating scale as well as an open-ended comment section. Follow-up continues as teachers complete their projects in order to obtain the full 10 Professional Development Points. Handouts from each workshop are available in the Master Notebook, submitted with this Final Report.

The only problem encountered with this project was that the GPS Workshop needed to be rescheduled due to storm conditions. This was done efficiently on e-mail. Teachers who had pre-registered but had a conflict with the new date were provided with a complete set of program materials. Significant additional funds from the MAC budget were used to support this effort. Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom met, and exceeded the required dollar and in-kind match for this grant.

Evaluations identified additional workshops that are of interest to high school teachers. Most notably is a workshop on "Greenhouse Management". Elementary school teachers also identified this as a need as we worked on another initiative. The evaluations provide us with many suggestions and ideas for future growth and expansion. Due to the great interest MAC has already scheduled two additional Aquaponics workshops this Spring to handle the "waiting list" from the Aquaponics Agro-Environmental Technology workshop.

Appropriate credits were given to the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture in the Seasonal Newsletter; on the website Aquaponic page; on all workshop programs and publicity. The Seasonal newsletter is distributed to over 10,500 individuals. The Board of Directors of MAC, Inc. is very pleased and excited about the product produced and hopes that the MDFA Agro- Environmental Technology Grant Program feels the same way. This project allowed us to reach out to a group of educators that we had not previously provided this level of advanced training. We were very pleased with the attendance by vo-ag high school teachers, and believe that their evaluations show their interest and enthusiasm on having this opportunity. The website provides an opportunity for additional "stories" which program participants are invited to submit. We believe that this project fulfilled all of its stated deliverables in a timely and complete fashion.

Submitted by:

Mary M. McBrady

Administrative Coordinator, On behalf of Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc.

April 17, 2001